

**Amendments to the Specification:**

Please replace the Abstract beginning at page 12, line 5, with the following rewritten paragraph:

-- A road mat of the present invention has having a mat body having with a first coupling end and a second coupling end. A first locking mechanism is provided at the first coupling end that includes a male coupling member and a female coupling member. A second locking mechanism is provided at the second coupling end that includes a male coupling member and a female coupling member. In one preferred embodiment of the present invention the first locking mechanism is a reciprocating mirror image of the second locking mechanism. The road mat of the present invention may be used in a road mat system that includes at least one prior road mat and at least one successive road mat. The second locking mechanism of the prior road mat is suitable for interlocking with the first locking mechanism of the successive road mat.--